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JUNE 2015

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WEEKEND GETAWAYS WITHIN
150 MILES OF AMES

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9:00 a.m.

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GateHouse Media®

FACETS IS A MONTHLY
PUBLICATION OF
GATEHOUSE MEDIA IOWA HOLDINGS.

Tribune Editor

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Summertime brings with it the joy, and possibly stress, of vacations. As a child my family didn't take many vacations. My dad owned a flooring installation business and worked six days a week, my mom had a full-time job and my sister and I were enrolled in summer park and rec activities to keep us busy and out of the house. I am sure many families can relate to this scenario. Because of all the activity already brought on by summer my family stayed home, for the most part. What we did was take small weekend travels. From elementary up through high school my sister and I made a point of traveling the two hours from Brookings, S.D. to Inwood, Iowa to visit my grandparents for a long weekend. As a family we might travel to Sioux Falls for the day, or go to our favorite restaurant in Flaudreau, S.D.

If your family is like mine, it can be difficult to find the time to escape for more than three days. Our writers have done a wonderful job of gathering together some weekend vacation options to help get the ball rolling.

Whether you want to travel to a different town or explore Iowa's natural spaces, we've got you covered. Living in Ames is quite nice. We are situated in the middle of the state. There are more vacation options within reasonable distance.

I will agree, it is nice to see the world. I have lived in Ireland, and traveled parts of Europe. I have also taken for granted our beautiful state of Iowa! Keep in mind all that Iowa has to offer when thinking of your summer vacations. What have you yet to explore in your hometown; in your home state?

Have fun, relax and remember the sunscreen!

— Margo Niemeyer

ON THE COVER: Photo contributed by
Travel Iowa.

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Needing a vacation from vacations

BY KAREN SCHWALLER
Contributing writer

As farm families go, the word ‘vacation’ is one that only comes out every few years. In our family — when I was growing up and in my adult life living on the farm — it’s a word we would have to dust off because it had been so long since we last heard it.

As kids, when we heard rumors of it, whispering and sibling networking would ensue, wondering if it was true. Would Dad really stop working to do that?

My parents were brave, indeed, taking seven kids on vacation in a station wagon. It was a lot of work for Mom and a lot of work for Dad to be able to afford it. One way they could make it work was to move in with unsuspecting relatives for the week, but most often we took an old pull-behind camper.

Oh, how our mother used to dislike our camping excursions. Becoming a farm wife after growing up a city girl was adjustment enough. She always said, “All this does is take my job and put it on wheels. That’s not a vacation for me.”

She had to stock it with food, cooking and dining pieces, sheets and blankets, cleaning supplies of all kinds, make sure the camp stove was working, make sure the tent got packed and more — and all of this after she first cleaned the mouse doo-doo out of it.

I’m sure the Department of Human Services would have taken us away from our parents if they’d only known.

It was August of 1977 that particular year when we left to vacation in some of Iowa’s state parks. Dad decided we should see some of Iowa — the only state that grown-up farm boy ever called ‘home.’

Things went along smoothly (by my standards, at least), until one day it happened. We heard it on the radio. Our eyes bulged like Rockefeller Christmas stockings.

Elvis Presley had died.

We were camping at Ledges State Park near Boone ... and without a television. My sister and I were like fishes out of water. From that point on we couldn’t wait for family time to be over so we could get back home to a television that would show us what the rest of the world would be seeing in all the days that would go by until we finally got home.

Fast forward many years, when my own family decided to head out to visit people in Colorado. I prepared and packed everything for us and our three kids. We started out on that long journey during a week when temperatures were in the high 90s and low 100s.

As we drove along, I had the same feeling that the mother on “Home

Alone” had when she wondered if she had forgotten something. I remembered all the kids, but I had forgotten to pack underwear for myself.

My mother made it look so easy — we always had underwear on vacation.

A look from my husband told me that he wasn’t sharing — especially with those kinds of temperatures and humidity. Desperate times called for desperate measures; there are certain things even husbands won’t share — and wives wouldn’t want to share.

Underwear stores were few and far between, and time was running out, with stores soon closing for the day. We happened upon one small town that had a Mom and Pop dime store, and luckily I found some of the beautiful merchandise and hugged it.

I’ve never looked at underwear the same again — or vacations.

Both were great once we were all intact.

But I may have needed a vacation from vacations after that.



Summer destinations:

Exciting, educational, enjoyable adventures within 150 miles of Ames

BY ROXANNE DASS | Contributing writer

The thought of summer often brings to mind long vacations in far away places. For some, though, a week-long vacation isn't an option between work, children's summer activities and busy lives in general. But, according to the Iowa Division of Tourism, relaxation is only a short drive away right here in Iowa. Whether you're looking for a romantic getaway or a fun family trip, Central Iowa offers exciting weekend trips for anything you desire.

Charles City: Girls Getaway

DISTANCE FROM AMES: 117 miles
ATTRACTIONS:

Celebrate the power and history of women with a getaway to Charles City with your best friends. Visit the childhood home and museum of Carrie Lane Chapman Catt, a leader in the women's suffrage movement. Learn how this Charles City and Iowa State University graduate helped organize women's voting rights in the United States.

Once you've learned about the suffrage movement, head over to the Mooney Art Collection and learn about some of history's greatest artists. The collection includes works by Rembrandt, Gauguin, Dali and Picasso. Or, if you prefer something that will get your heart racing, cruise down the city's public Whitewater Course, which feature three distinct features for rafters, kayakers and tubers alike.

End your day with a glass of wine and good conversation at the five-room Sherman House Bed and Breakfast. The sunroom and wrap-around porch are the perfect places to relax and enjoy the warm summer evenings with your girlfriends.



Photo courtesy of Travel Iowa

LINKS

Charles City: www.traveliowa.com/aspx/cities.aspx?cid=324
 Carrie Lane Chapman Catt Museum: catt.org/index.html
 Mooney Art Collection: charlescitypl.com/
 Whitewater Course: ccwhitewater.com/
 Sherman House Bed & Breakfast: shermanhousecc.com/

Carroll and Coon Rapids: Outdoor Adventures

Destinations continued from page 7

DISTANCE FROM AMES:

Carroll 68 miles;

Coon Rapids 71 miles

ATTRACTIONS:

For families who enjoy outdoor activities, Iowa offers gorgeous trails and camping locations. Load up your bikes for a trip down the Sauk Rail Trail. The 33-mile trail begins in Lake View and heads south. You can stop for refreshments at Red's Place in Breda. Pedal your way to Carroll and enjoy a glass of wine at the Santa Marie Winery.

Just a short drive away from Carroll is the Whiterock Conservancy in Coon Rapids. The conservancy offers lodging for any type of camping experience you would want, from fully modern homes and cabins to rustic lodges and tent camping. Boat rentals are also available. But if you prefer providing the manpower for your vessel, launch a kayak into the Middle Raccoon River and float down one of Iowa's most loved water trails.



Photos courtesy of Travel Iowa

LINKS

Carroll: www.traveliowa.com/asp/cities.aspx?cid=119

Coon Rapids: www.traveliowa.com/asp/cities.aspx?cid=120

Sauk Rail Trail: www.sauk-trail.com/

Whiterock Conservancy: www.whiterockconservancy.org/index.html

Middle Raccoon River: www.co.dallas.ia.us/departments-services/conservation/parks-recreation/trails/middle-south-raccoon-river-water-trail

Storm Lake: Family Fun

DISTANCE FROM AMES: 127 miles

ATTRACTIONS:

Storm Lake features fun family attractions for both land lovers and those born with fins. The family should first check in and unload their bags at King's Pointe Resort. This resort features a hotel and an indoor-outdoor water-park with eight slides, lazy river, splash pad, lap lanes, diving boards, several other water features and a mini-golf course.

The 3,200 acre Storm Lake itself offers tons of outdoor fun, including some of the best walleye fishing in Iowa. Boat rentals are also available to zip around the water or to spend a lazy afternoon on one of the public beaches.

For those who don't quite have their sea legs, Storm Lake also has a beautiful bike and hike trail.



Photos courtesy of Travel Iowa

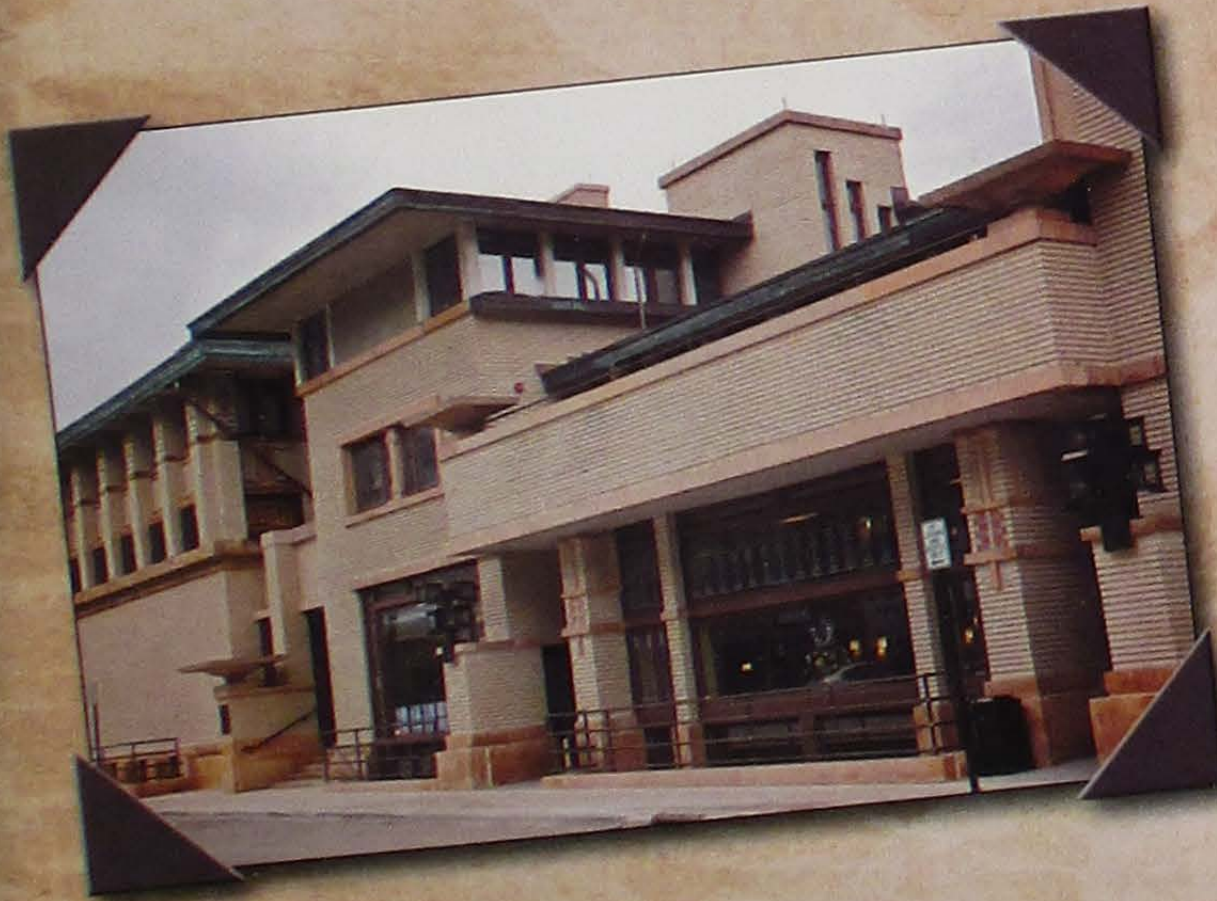
LINKS

Storm Lake: www.traveliowa.com/aspx/cities.aspx?cid=93

King's Pointe Resort: www.kingspointeresort.com/

Bike and Hike Trail: www.inhf.org/trails/storm-lake.cfm

Mason City: Romantic Weekend



DISTANCE FROM AMES:
91 miles

ATTRACTIONS:

Find a babysitter for the kids or pets for the weekend, while you and your significant other take a weekend off. Stay the weekend at the Historic Park Inn, the last remaining hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The quiet, romantic hotel is the perfect setting to reconnect and recharge. For a fancy dinner, visit the adjacent 1910 Grille. But, if you want the best steak in Iowa, drive to the edge of

town and eat at the Northwestern Steakhouse. Their steak was voted Best Steak for the last six years running.

To burn off some of that delicious food, spend the next day visiting some of Mason City's fine art spots. Visit the McNider Art Museum that features a permanent collection of American art. You can also participate in one of the many art classes offered. Or, you can stroll past the River City Sculptures on Parade, a 1.6 mile walk with original sculptures on display.

LINKS

Mason City: www.traveliowa.com/aspx/cities.aspx?cid=148

Historic Park Inn: www.stoneycreekhôtels.com/hotel/travel/masoncity-parkinn/home.do

Northwestern Steakhouse: www.northwesternsteakhouse.com/

McNider Art Center: macniderart.org/

River City Sculpture On Parade: www.sculpturesonparade.com/

LIVING WITH CHILDREN: Discipline issue blows up family togetherness



Q : My husband and I need your advice. We are parents to one adult daughter who has three children ages 10, 7, and 4. They live about three hours away and up until two years ago we saw them fairly often. Our visits were often very uncomfortable, however, because she

and her husband do not discipline the children. As a consequence, they are rude, sassy and disrespectful. They have no respect whatsoever for adult authority, something the older kids' teachers have also commented on. Our daughter and her husband are in denial about the problem, maintaining

that the kids are misunderstood. When we finally worked up the courage to say something, they both blew up and have refused to let us have the kids by ourselves ever since. We feel we're a good influence in the kids' lives, a better influence than their parents, in fact. What should we do?

A : If my mail and conversations are any indication, your problem is shared by many, many grandparents nationwide. In no small number of American families today, a huge and sometimes insurmountable disconnect exists between grandparents' versus parents' expectations concerning child behavior. In its worst form, which you describe, the disconnect has caused significant intergenerational conflict and in some cases, alienation.

I'm a grandparent and a member of that generation that was raised to respect adult authority. From the get-go, we were taught proper manners and expected to obey. That child-rearing ethic began to unravel in the 1960s. Paradoxically, we were the last generation of children raised the "old" way and the first generation of parents to raise kids the new way. We let the foot of disciplinary laziness in the door, but by the time our kids were grown, most of us had realized our mistake.

So you have a generation of grandparents who clearly see the mistakes many young parents are making and a generation of parents many of whom have no experiential

basis for understanding that they are making mistakes. It should go without saying that there are lots of exceptions to this dynamic, but it's a commonplace one nonetheless.

The fact of the matter is that when the intergenerational disconnect in question exists, grandparents can't win for losing. If they want to see their grandkids, they must endure lots of discomfort and not give advice unless the parents specifically ask for it. That was your mistake, apparently: You gave advice and commentary without permission to do so. In so doing, you crossed a line, and your daughter and her husband reacted with anger and defensiveness.

So I understand where you're coming from and I understand where they're coming from as well. But since you stepped over the line, it's your responsibility to make apologies. Your grandchildren need your influence, and so you need to be able to be alone with them, to take them on vacation with you and the like.

In short, I recommend that you eat some crow here. Everyone will benefit.

EXPLORE THE GREAT OUTDOORS

BY TODD BURRAS
Contributing writer

Summer is nearly here. It's time for backyard grilling, gardening, swimming, soaking in the sun and, for many people, vacation or vacations.

While lots of Mid-Iowans will be packing their bags for destinations around the country and even abroad, many others, for various reasons, will be sticking around home. That doesn't have to be a bad thing, though. In fact, it might have its share of benefits, primarily on your bank account but perhaps also on your sanity, as travel can often be stressful and even exhausting, leaving vacation-goers once they return home in need of a vacation.

Still, those homebound for the summer need some breaks of their own, and if the outdoors is your thing, like it is mine, there are plenty of places to escape within Mid-Iowa for a few minutes, a few hours or even a few days.

However, if your idea of spending time outdoors is simply hanging out on the back deck with friends for a cookout, walking the dog to

the end of the block and back or watching "Nature" on public television, then maybe with a little encouragement and a few suggestions, this might be a good summer to broaden your appreciation for the great outdoors and to the benefits — physical, mental and emotional — that spending more time outdoors can provide.

In the past decade there's no place in central Iowa I've spent more time hiking, birding, paddling, fishing and just walking than Ada Hayden Heritage Park in Ames, and I'm not alone. Visitors flock to the park during spring, summer, fall and even on nice winter days. But while it's unquestionably the busiest recreational space the city has, it's certainly not the only great green space it has to offer. In fact, Ames has some of the most park space per capita of any city its size in the United States.

If you live here, you've likely visited one or more of the larger parks, such as Brookside Park, which is a tremendous spot for birding and picnicking, and also provides a valuable link for cyclists biking from the north part of Ames

to the south and visa versa. There's also Carr Woods, Inis Grove Park, the trail that now connects Emma McCarthy Lee Park and Munn Woods, Stuart Smith Park, Ames High Prairie and Moore Memorial Park, as well as other smaller parks scattered throughout the city.

Around Story County there's the Skunk River Greenbelt Trail between Story City and Ames, which, among other activities, offers access to some excellent smallmouth bass fishing in the Skunk River. McFarland Park and Peterson Pits, northeast of Ames, are places to go birding, fishing and even swimming (at Peterson Pits). Dakins Lake near Zearing is a good place to go camping, while Hickory Grove Park near Colo offers opportunities for fishing as well as hiking, paddling, camping, birding, swimming and berry and mushroom picking.

While my family has spent many hours at each of the aforementioned locales, as well as others, here are a few of our favorite getaways outside Story County that all can be reached within an hour's drive.

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LEDGES STATE PARK

EXPLORE continued from page 11

It would be easy to get lost at Ledges State Park in the Des Moines River Valley near Boone. Not so much physically lost — though at 1,117 acres of primarily woods it could happen — but lost more so in a metaphorical way.

Whether you're traveling by foot or vehicle, you're bound to end up in the park's canyon where you'll be surrounded by steep sandstone ledges some 100 feet overhead. Here's your first history lesson to the area: According to geologists, the sandstone was deposited millions of years ago following the retreat of the shallow sea that

covered most of the Midwest. Then, at the time of the last glacial period, some 13,000 to 14,000 years ago, melt-water cut through the sandstone to form the valleys and cliffs that make the park unique. Finally, prior to European settlement, the area was inhabited by the Sioux, Fox and Sauk tribes, and a few Indian mounds survive to remind visitors of some of the park's human history.

Those facts alone would give park visitors plenty to ruminate on, but if they did, they might miss out on the chance to walk through a restored prairie, spectacular oak forests and the pretty creek that winds its way through the canyon. Taking off your shoes and socks and

getting your feet wet is highly recommended for kids of all ages — young and old.

Ledges is also a birder's paradise anytime of the year, with more than 200 species of birds recorded there. One avian species that can be found in the park that can't be in most places around the state is the pileated woodpecker with its striking shape that conjures images of prehistoric pterodactyls. It's an appropriate resident of an area that seems to provide many glances into our ancient past.

■ For more information, Google "Ledges State Park" and click on the Iowa DNR's link to the park.

PINE LAKE STATE PARK

If you really want to get away to the north woods but don't have the time or resources to do so, an hour-long drive to the Iowa River Valley and Pine Lake State Park near Eldora will satisfy your yearning.

What sets this scenic park apart from others are the many 250-year-old white pines that tower above the shoreline of the upper and lower lakes and have likely caused many an angler and paddler to feel as if they're adrift in a lake someplace in northern Minnesota, Wisconsin or the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Modern camping facilities are new and aplenty, with more than 120 units with electrical hookups, and there are about 10 miles of hiking trails around the two lakes. If tent or trailer camping isn't to your liking, the park also has four stone and wood cabins that include fireplaces and air conditioning.

Whether you're sleeping in a cabin, trailer or tent, you'll likely drift asleep feeling as if you're somewhere far away in the north woods. All you'll sense that's missing is the lonely wailing call of a common loon or the howling of a timber wolf.

■ For more information, Google "Pine Lake State Park Eldora" and click on the Iowa DNR's link to the park.

A GREEN DAY TOOL KIT

Nature is good for the body and the soul, and exploring the outdoors with your children and grandchildren can provide some of the most joyful times in a person's life.

This summer make it a priority to get out and explore some natural areas with some of the young people in your life. You don't have to go far and it won't cost much, but the time spent together will last a lifetime.

When you go, be sure to include some of the following items to ensure you're day or days go well:

- Plenty of snacks and water.
- Bug repellent and sun screen.
- A bath towel and a change of clothes.
- Flip-flops (you never know when the urge to get in the water might strike).
- Binoculars, a camera and/or a magnifying glass.
- Field guides and a journal/notebook (to jot down things that were seen and said.)
- Curiosity and an adventurous spirit (if you have both of these, you'll have the time of your life regardless of the weather and what you see or don't see.)

Indoor-outdoor furniture: A natural fit

BY MEGAN BUERGER
Special to The Washington Post

When designers say, “Bring the outdoors in!” they’re usually referring to plants. But while leafy greens are one way to freshen up a room, they’re not Mother Nature’s only children.

Indoor-outdoor furniture isn’t often recommended to apartment dwellers, probably because few apartments can claim an outdoor space. But perhaps it should be. Transitional pieces that can take a beating and work in a variety of spaces are often exactly what urbanites need. “It’s like clothing,” says Nancy M. Colbert, who works for Design Partners in McLean, Va. “When you invest in it, you expect it to weather a few moves.”

And thanks to improved technology, durable materials such as polypropylene or Sunbrella are no longer stiff and waxy. Natural materials such as reclaimed wood have seen a renaissance, and materials

such as sea grass and wicker, which were long taboo indoors, are welcome under the right circumstances.

That’s great news for apartment renters, because these materials are nothing if not versatile. If you’re having a last-minute gathering and need extra seating, or find yourself moving into an apartment with a balcony, you won’t have to buy all-new furniture.

Mark Jupiter, a furniture designer in Brooklyn who specializes in working with wood, encourages homeowners to embrace natural materials interiors. “They make a home feel less stuffy,” he says. “My whole business is based on modern interpretations of that raw, natural look.”

A wooden bench, for example, is one piece that comes in handy almost anywhere you stick it. Slide it up next to the foot of a bed or the back of a sofa to use as a makeshift table, or by an entryway as a catch-all piece for bags. Many retailers

offer storage benches (such as Target’s wicker storage seat, \$136, www.target.com) to keep boots, hats and gloves out of sight. Or, for a more modern look, try Crate and Barrel’s Fiji bench (\$299, www.crateandbarrel.com). Although it’s not a true outdoor piece, it’s made from natural materials (handwoven lampakanay rope) and a wooden frame finished in matte lacquer, giving it an outdoor feel.

“Reclaimed wood has been big for a few years now, the newer trend is to mix it with metals, marbles, things that add dimension and surprise,” says April Force Pardoe, of AFP Interiors in Elkridge, Md., who says the trend was in full effect at the spring High Point Market. “It’s like nothing is one material anymore.”

The one material Pardoe is not sure about using indoors? Wicker. There are two camps on wicker, she says, and she sides with those who think it can look too traditional, and thus out of place in an apartment. She steers

clients toward the thick, woven variety. “It’s unexpected, but warm,” she says. Another way to keep the look modern is to look for wicker pieces in clean, stylish silhouettes. The brown Giesel PE wicker outdoor chairs (\$229 for a set of two, www.wayfair.com) are a modern spin on the Louis chair that, at just 12 pounds, can easily be moved indoors or outdoors based on the occasion.

Speaking of unexpected, one of Pardoe’s handiest design items for spicing up an interior is a garden stool. The traditional ones — often shaped like plump barrel drums, lacquer-finished with little cutouts — are rather country-chic, and almost conjure up a grandmother’s home. But garden stools actually hail from ancient China, where they were fashioned out of tree stumps. Today, they’re a go-to accent piece for designers who want to add a heavy dose of color and texture to a stale room, and what’s more, they’re highly functional.



From left to right: Ikea’s \$70 Applaro storage bench; Safavieh’s Izola garden stool is \$120 at Wayfair.com; Target \$136 Household Essentials wicker storage seat. Photos by Megan Buerger/Special to The Washington Post/Ikea; Safavieh; Target

SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR AND JESTER PARK

With the exception of Ada Hayden Heritage Park, we've spent more time exploring the Saylorville Reservoir area north of Des Moines than any other natural area in Iowa. Perhaps it's because it's on the way to other destinations in the metro area and a handy place to sidetrack through.

More likely it's because it's simply one of the largest (the Saylorville Lake Recreation Area covers some 26,000 acres and stretches for more than 50 miles up the Des Moines River Valley) and most beautiful natural areas of this part of the state where we could spend hours, if not days, walking, hiking, paddling and driving from one area to the next.

We typically start at the visitor center near the east end of the dam where we often stand mesmerized watching countless birds flitting back and forth to numerous feeding stations, and then from there either drive or walk down below the spillway to look for bald eagles, pelicans, waterfowl and shorebirds along the river before exploring the surrounding ponds and woods that often reveal deer, Canada geese, great blue herons and other wildlife.

After that, a stop for a picnic at Cherry Glen Campground usually leads to more birdwatching for orioles, buntings and bluebirds, and even some mushroom hunting.

When time permits, a drive up the west side of the lake leads to Jester Park, home of the Polk County Conservation Board visitor center and another series of foot and vehicle paths that lead deeper into the park where visitors can find a peaceful fishing hole and eventually a couple of small herds of both buffalo and elk grazing in small prairie enclosures. It's not often Iowans can get such a close look at some of the state's most prominent former mammalian inhabitants.

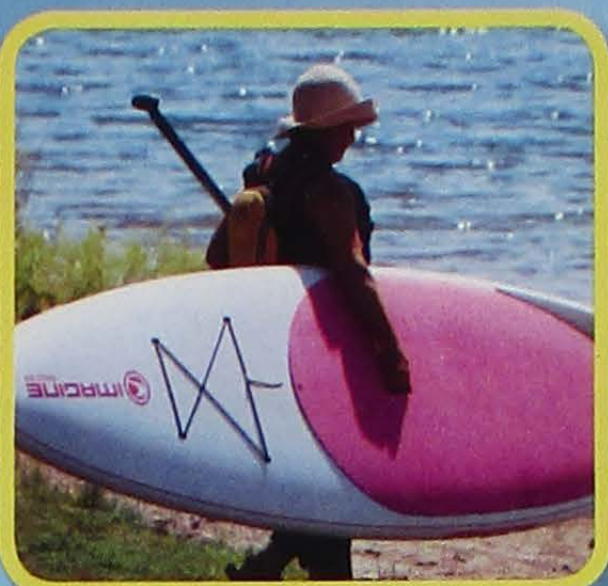
■ For more information, Google "Saylorville Reservoir" and click on the Iowa DNR's link to the park.

EXPLORE, page 14



Photos contributed by Todd Burras

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RECREATION

NEAL SMITH WILDLIFE REFUGE

EXPLORE continued from page 13

PARKS AND OUTDOOR SPACES

IN AMES

Ada Hayden Heritage Park
Brookside Park
Carr Woods
Inis Grove Park
Emma McCarthy Lee Park
Munn Woods
Stuart Smith Park
Ames High Prairie
Moore Memorial Park

AROUND STORY COUNTY

Skunk River Greenbelt Trail
McFarland Park
Peterson Pits
Dakins Lake
Hickory Grove Park

IN IOWA

Ledges State Park
Pine Lakes State Park
Saylorville Reservoir
Saylorville Lake Recreation Area
Jester Park
Des Moines River Valley
Cherry Glen Campground
Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge

Jester Park isn't the only place to see buffalo and elk in central Iowa. In fact, take the 50-minute drive to the 8,600-acre Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge near Prairie City and you'll see an even larger herd of buffalo and elk in a more natural setting.

The buffalo and elk are located within a sprawling 700-acre enclosure that is transected by a gravel road. It's not uncommon to have to stop driving while buffalo cross and even linger on the road. Once, when visiting the park in late winter or early spring, a buffalo took time to lick the rear bumper of our SUV, likely attracted to the smell of salt or other minerals that had accumulated on the vehicle. It was the strangest car wash we've ever experienced.

But buffalo and elk are only a few features of the refuge where during summer, with the big ungulates roaming a prairie in full bloom and big bluestem waving tall across the hills, one can get a realistic sense of what the Great Plains once looked like before the Europeans arrived and the steel plow eventually transformed the central portion of the country forever.

You can learn all about the natural history of the prairie at the Prairie Learning and Visitor Center, and then jump on one of the many paved trails that wind around the rolling landscape that managers have worked hard at restoring to tallgrass prairie, oak savannah and sedge meadow ecosystems that once dominated much of the Midwest. You'll see numerous species of beautiful birds, butterflies and flowers, and maybe even a badger, fox or short-eared owl.

If you've ever read the "Little House on the Prairie" series by Laura Ingalls Wilder and haven't been to the Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge, you need to go. This summer.

■ For more information, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/neal_smith.

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Traveling tips for your beauty regimen

No. 7

Take the
products you
are used to.
A vacation is
not the time
to experiment
with new ones.

No. 12

Put sunscreen
on your
part line.

MARY CLARE LOKKEN
Contributing writer

Vacation brings up feelings of fun, sun and freedom. That's freedom from stress, work and the routine.

In order to enjoy that freedom you'll need a solid plan so you can look and feel great while ignoring much of your usual beauty routine.

No. 1 Simplify your beauty plan so you don't have to take so much stuff with you. Whether you travel by air, train or car pretend you are traveling by bike and pack accordingly. Keep the load light and the routine simple.

Shampoo and conditioner are the basics and in the sizes that will be gone at trip's end. Avoid hotel brands that tend to be drying.

No. 2 Think of the ways you can wear your hair without lots of different styling products. Go for one or two that can do it all and again that will be used up at the end. If you are a road warrior who travels for a living you've got this.

No. 3 Do the same for skin care and makeup. You could even skip foundation and just go with moisturizer. Try a tinted moisturizer during the day and an intense one the night before you leave and every night on the trip. Keep your skin hydrated and it will be more beautiful. Consider the climate where you are going. Hawaii, for example, doesn't require as much hydration because there is more moisture in the air.

No. 4 Don't forget the lips. They need to stay hydrated at all times and that is not lipstick or chapstick. Go for a lip treatment and apply it often.

No. 5 Avoid mascara while traveling. It never looks great after a quick nap at the beach. Get a lash tint before leaving home. Better salons offer a vegetable dye that lasts for a vacation and unlike hair-color doesn't show the regrowth.

No. 6 Get a gel manicure and pedicure. They last until grown out and do not chip. This is especially great if you have weak nails.

No. 7 Take the products you are used to. A vacation is not the time to experiment with new ones.

No. 8 Get lots of rest even while traveling to your destination. A rich eye cream applied before napping on the plane or in the car prior to a nap works wonders.

No. 9 Keep your hands from drying out with your favorite cream. You'll be exposed to harsh soaps in public restrooms and your hands will need to recover.

No. 10 Sunscreen is a super tip from PCI Academy skin care and nail care educator Sarah Sahl. Nothing puts a damper on vacation like a painful sunburn.

No. 11 Michelle Uthe, educator at PCI, says her biggest vacation tip is putting conditioner in your hair before getting in the water. The conditioner is absorbed into the hair preventing chlorine and other contaminants from being absorbed as much.

No. 12 Also from Uthe, put sunscreen on your part line.

No. 13 If you tend to have oily hair and scalp use a dry shampoo. Be sure you try it before leaving home.

Have a great vacation!



MARY CLARE LOKKEN

Balancing exercise and safety on vacation

BY EILEEN OGINTZ
Tribune News Service

It's every traveler's worst nightmare.

You or someone you are traveling with gets hurt or dies on vacation. An added twist is when the injury occurs while you are trying to keep yourself healthy by exercising.

How many times have you been the only one at a hotel gym? How long would it take for someone to find you if you suffered a debilitating injury? What about your teen athlete using the unfamiliar equipment?

"People are trying to stay healthy and think exercise on vacation is a good thing...you have to realize you are operating a machine and if you get distracted, you can really injure yourself," said Dr. Monica Vavilala, director of the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center at the University of Washington and the lead author on a study that looked at exercise machine related injuries. Treadmills, the study reported, accounted for 66 per cent of injuries that sent people to the emergency room.

On May 1 well-known Silicon Valley entrepreneur Dave Goldberg, 47, the husband of Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg, died while on vacation in Mexico after a freak treadmill accident. Goldberg appeared to have fallen and hit his head, Mexican authorities said. After he was found, he was taken to a hospital where he died of head trauma and blood loss.

The couple were staying with friends and family at a posh villa in the gated community of Punta Mita, north of Puerto Vallarta, that is also home to the St. Regis and Four Seasons Resorts. Even in a dream vacation spot, you're not immune from such accidents, Dr. Vavilala said, adding that should you get injured abroad, remote locations "may make sophisticated care problematic."

That Goldberg died from a treadmill accident is not unheard of — there were 30 deaths associated with treadmills in the 10 years up through 2012, about three a year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

That he got hurt using exercise equipment is much more common: Such injuries landed 62,600 people in the emergency room in the United States last year, according to the CPSC.

Treadmills are responsible for more injuries last year — 24,400 — than any other piece of exercise equipment.

Kids are also at great risk, said Dr. Janessa Graves, a Washington State University nursing professor who was also part of the team that studied exercise machine related injuries. In fact, said Dr. Graves, "Kids are at much greater risk." They end up in the ER 2.5 times more often from exercise machine injuries than adults, she said.

Why? Parents get distracted. Kids get on a running machine and fall or get hand lacerations. "Don't bring your kids with you to the hotel gym," she cautioned. If you are at a rental home, "don't use exercise machines around your kids... Kids and (exercise equipment) do not make for a happy outcome."

Also consider that at a vacation destination, you are using unfamiliar equipment and don't know how well it has been maintained. Yet you are the one taking all the risk, said Charles Martin Arnold, a New York personal injury attorney who is an expert on insurance law. Under the law, any time you are involved in an activity that involves exercise, you are assuming the risk, he explained. The only difference might be if you can prove there was a defect in the equipment. And even if that were the case, it would be a tough case to win, he said.

Certainly a lot more people are exercising on vacation — 18 percent of those surveyed for the soon-to-be-released Portrait of American Travelers said they are exercising more on vacation than previously.

But remember, many hotel gyms aren't staffed; nor can you be certain of the quality of the equipment. Ask how the machines are maintained. Is there a safety feature that turns a treadmill off if you fall? Most hotel groups I called didn't want to comment. Some said standards and protocols vary from property to property. Maybe one fitness center is staffed part of the day while another is entirely self service.

If you are going for a run in unfamiliar climes, carry your phone and make sure someone knows your route should you become incapacitated.

I know no one wants to think of such things on vacation but as Goldberg's accident showed all of us, we have to.





GRILLED SKIRT STEAK WITH CHIMICHURRI DRY RUB

BY GRETCHEN MCKAY
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette/Tribune News
Service

Go ahead. Take a whiff. Doesn't it smell great outside?

That's because now that it's (finally) nice outside, your neighbors are firing up their grills. You should, too, and what better way to welcome the 2015 grilling season than with a perfectly seasoned steak.

Argentinian chimichurri sauce is usually a fragrant, pesto-like melange of fresh herbs, but here grilling gurus Cheryl and Bill Jamison offer up a dry version. You probably have all the ingredients in your pantry.

I used skirt steak, but this rub would work just as well on flank or flat iron steaks.

GRILLED SKIRT STEAK WITH CHIMICHURRI DRY RUB

1/2 cup crumbled dried oregano
2 tablespoons dried parsley flakes
2 tablespoons dried summer or winter
savory
2 tablespoons crumbled dried thyme
1 tablespoon kosher salt or coarse sea
salt
1 tablespoon coarsely ground black
pepper
1 tablespoons granulated garlic
1 tablespoon smoked paprika
2 pounds skirt steak, cut into 3 or 4
equal pieces
Stir together all the ingredients except
steak in a small bowl.
Sprinkle the rub heavily on the beef
and then massage it in well.

Allow the seasoned meat to sit for at least 45 minutes at room temperature, or up to overnight wrapped or covered in the refrigerator, prior to cooking. Store any remaining rub in a covered container in a cool, dark pantry for up to a month.

Prepare the grill for direct cooking over high heat.

Brush the cooking grates clean. Grill the steaks over direct high heat with grill lid closed as much as possible, until cooked to your desired doneness, 3 to 4 minutes per side for medium rare. Remove from the grill and let rest for 2 to 3 minutes, then serve immediately.

Serves 4 to 6.

— Adapted from "The Barbecue Lover's Big Book of BBQ Sauces" by Cheryl and Bill Jamison (Harvard Common Press, April 2015, \$18.95)

How to be financially healthy

BY LARRY LIGHT
AdviceIQ

Paul Sullivan had a rough early life: a threadbare home, divorced parents, a lousy school and few prospects. Today, he is a highly regarded personal finance columnist for the New York Times, has a nice salary and lives in a wealthy suburb. How did that happen? Pluck and luck, yes, but also insights from savvy onlookers.

His path to financial well-being owes a lot to his grandfather, a retired postman who saved money and spent prudently. The grandfather rescued Paul and his mom from their squalid apartment in a dangerous drug-dealer-infested town, installing them in a condo he bought in a nicer community.

The older man figured that Paul could win a scholarship to a local private school, and that indeed panned out. Paul thrived in the new school and got money to go to a top college. Paul lived within his means as he set forth in the adult world. He rose as a journalist and married a woman with a good job as a recruiter.

Sullivan's story illustrates the power of good advice. While the grandfather's buying the condo was a big help, his example and his strategic planning for education made a big difference.

Certainly, Sullivan had negative influences to overcome. Both his parents, while financially strapped, were spendthrifts. His father, in the 1980s, had a thing for Ralph Lauren Polo shirts, when other golf shirts cost one-third as much. His mother worked part-time jobs she hated so she could buy fancy jewelry she did not need.

These life lessons are distilled in Sullivan's new book, "The Thin Green Line: The Money Secrets of the Super Wealthy." This is a superb, and very useful, read. In his lexicon, the "wealthy" are not necessarily the megabucks crowd. He defines wealthy as "having more money than you needed to do all the things you wanted." In other words, it's a psychological state.

The antithesis of the wealthy is the "rich," who may have a lot of money and possessions, but their status is precarious, and they live in fear. As Sullivan describes them: "Rich was the guy in my town who drove the red

Mercedes SL500 roadster, lived in a heavily mortgaged ... home. And had a month to find a job before he — or his second wife — blew through what little savings they had."

There are dozens of sad tales of movie stars and athletes who wasted pots of money and ended up with nothing. Sullivan serves up mini-profiles of wiser souls, such as star quarterback Roger Staubach, who triumphed with the Dallas Cowboys in the 1970s. Staubach, who had kids to support, knew that his playing days were numbered, and became an insurance salesman. He eventually had his own company, and a solid financial footing.

Among the many virtues of Sullivan's book is that it shows how the need for financial advice — born of hard scrutiny from knowledgeable observers — is an ongoing process. Your situation changes, and so does your need for a fresh look.

The book begins with an intriguing set piece in which Sullivan visited a group called Tiger 21, made up of well-heeled folks (minimum worth: \$10 million). Every month, a panel from this club dissects the finances of a member, a brutal process Sullivan calls "tough love." He went before the tribunal, confident they would applaud the judicious decisions he and his wife, Laura, had made. He was wrong.

The panelists trashed key parts of the couple's financial structure. They found the Sullivans' low level of life and disability insurance to be perilous. One member recommended they sell their Florida vacation home, even though they'd lose money. The inquiry focused on the shakiness of Paul and Laura's industries and cast doubt on their assumptions that their incomes would keep increasing.

Sullivan left the club's Manhattan townhouse stunned. He didn't realize how extravagant he had become. When Laura later picked him up at their Connecticut train station, it was in their new car. He realized that they were having two bathrooms renovated.

"Why had I not thought more about the difference between what we could afford and what we needed?" he writes.

But indeed, he did think about it, eventually. And that's good. Constant re-examination is crucial to keep your money safe, and you, too.

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Skip the Beach; Visit the Bench

BY JAN RIGGENBACH
Contributing writer

When gardeners gather, benches are often a source of amusement. We admit to each other that, while we love creating cozy little nooks that include lovely benches, we seldom take time to actually sit on the benches to enjoy the view.

So here's a radical idea: What if we took the same time normally spent on planning a vacation trip to plan instead a vacation at home? We could hurry to get everything ready, just like we would if we were actually leaving. Stocking up on picnic food in advance would help free up time normally spent in the kitchen and encourage relaxed time outdoors. Perhaps then, our seldom-used benches would get more use.

I've yet to experience a prolonged stay-at-home vacation, but I do enjoy wandering around the garden in the early morning with my first cup of tea in hand. That's the best time for special sights like the morning dew sparkling like jewels on lady's mantle scalloped leaves.

At any hour of the day, I've found that having a camera in hand encourages me to focus my attention on the beauty, not on weeds or other garden chores that need attention.

Just like new sights you see on a vacation, a garden is filled with pleasures that can "transport" you to another world. I never tire of

watching a tiny hummingbird hovering over one flower after another, perhaps close enough to hear the beating of its tiny wings. For evening viewing, there's often a hawk moth masquerading as a hummingbird as it sips nectar from fragrant four-o'clock and woodland tobacco blossoms.

Nothing is more relaxing than watching water, even a tiny pool or container. Not everyone has the time, the space, or the inclination to tend a big backyard water garden, but anyone can enjoy the pleasure of a pond-free recirculating waterfall or a fountain. The sound itself is a pleasure, not to mention watching the birds that come to sip the water or take a shower.

It's also gratifying to watch birds devouring your garden's insect pests. House wrens, for example, do a fine job of gobbling up the bean beetles and cabbage worms in my vegetable garden.

Like bird watching, butterfly watching could be an engaging hobby in its own right. Butterflies like many different flowers, but zinnias are a surefire draw. Inexpensive and easy to grow from a packet of seeds, they grow quickly. All types of blazing stars (*Liatris*) are also popular with the butterflies. Of course, the butterfly show is bigger and better when you plant the foods their larvae eat, such as milkweed for monarchs, violet for fritillaries, and dill for black swallowtails.

With the garden's beauty and a bench close at hand, every day can become a mini vacation.

The Thrifty Traveler:

Affordable itinerary ideas

BY MYSCHA THERIAULT
Tribune News Service

While there's always something new and fresh to try at each destination, there are a number of affordable vacation activities that can be a part of practically any trip you take. Finding a few you consistently enjoy is a great strategy for channeling extra vacation pennies toward a splurge or bucket-list experience.

■ **Strolling:** Exploring a location on foot provides a close look at local culture, history, architecture and more. In addition to free, self-guided tours, cemeteries make a perfect spot to take a more isolated walk and get a break from the hustle and bustle on the street. Graves of favorite artists or significant historical personalities can make an interesting stop on your itinerary. For example, the grave of musician Duane Allman at Rose Hill Cemetery in Macon, Ga., receives visitors throughout the year.

Similarly, in Deadwood, S.D., the Mount Moriah Cemetery is home to the graves of such legends as Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane. Ernest Hemingway's grave in Ketchum, Idaho, also offers a free travel experience for die-hard American literature fans. Other fun areas to pound the pavement include local outdoor markets, cultural districts and park trails.

■ **Solitude:** Even if you're traveling with a partner, grabbing a little time alone is a nice way to build some personal memories and

move at your own pace. A walk on the beach, a day trip to a museum or even exploring the side streets alone in search of hidden gems will give you a chance to enjoy the nuances that are easy to miss when you're socializing with a trip companion.

If you're traveling solo, solitude from the throngs of other tourists can be a soothing balm, even if it's just for a few minutes. An easy way to make this happen is by ducking into an old church or temple. A great many of them are open to the public, and offer a chance to explore the local flavor away from the crowds.

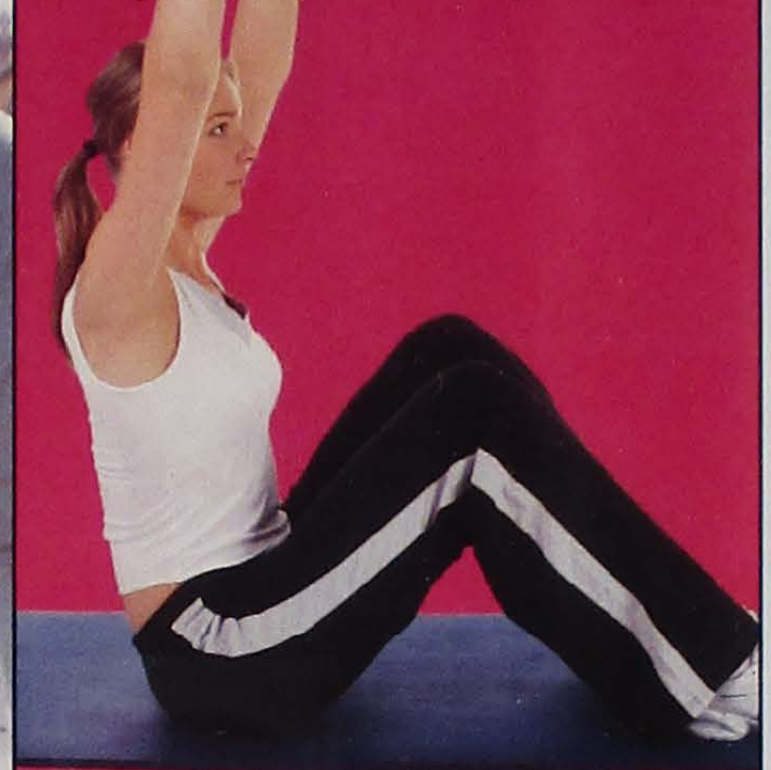
■ **Snapshots:** When I first started traveling a few years after college, the cost for my love of souvenir pictures was high. Film, batteries and development expenses could easily total in the hundreds of dollars for an extended trip to an exotic destination. Now, for the same amount of money I would have previously spent on pictures for roughly three trips, travelers can score a decent-quality digital camera and never have to pay for film again. This places vacation photography at the top of my short list when it comes to inexpensive travel mementos.

Other common options for affordable entertainment on the road include museums, dance venues and roadside attractions. Consider embracing some of the free activities available during your next getaway. Not only will it help you afford a few of the luxuries you want, it will open up the door for some additional vacation fun as well.

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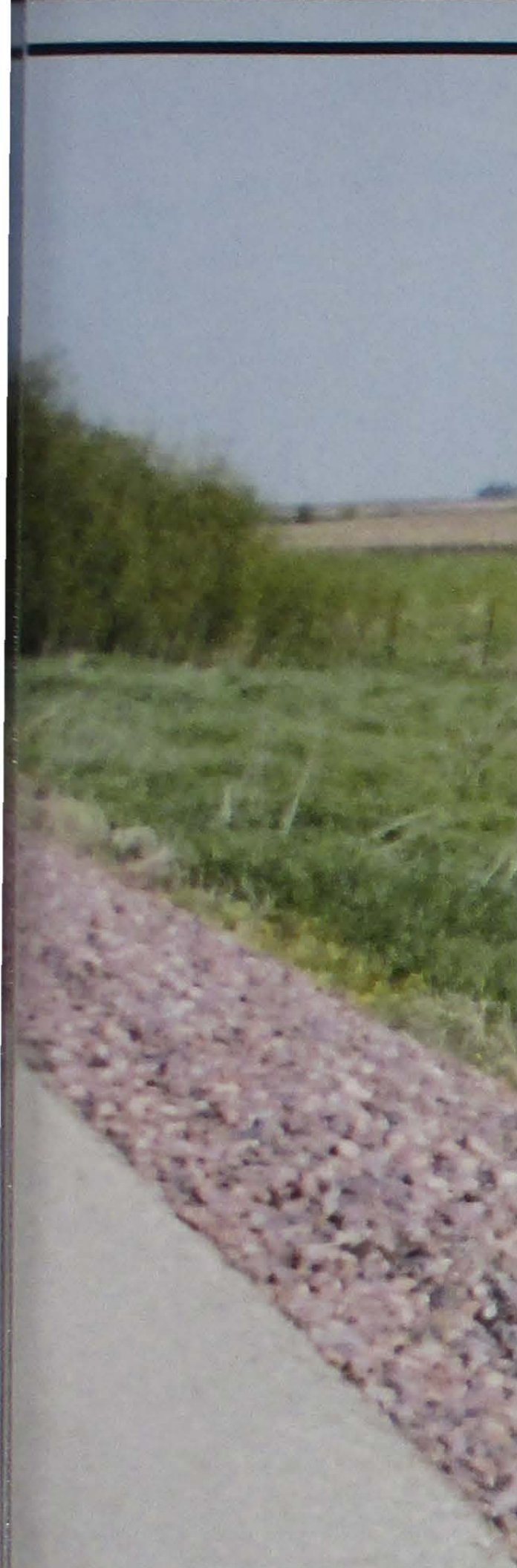
Do you RAGBRAI?

KECIA PLACE-FENCL
Contributing writer

The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) is the annual 7 day bicycle ride across the state of Iowa and is the largest and longest bicycle touring event in the world. I asked people why they go on RAGBRAI and here are some of the responses that I was given:

- to ride their bicycle on roads that are closed to traffic.
- to socialize with friends.
- to make new friends.
- as a way to become more "fit" by cycling more regularly.
- to experience parts of Iowa in a new and fun way.
- to experience the "Iowa culture."
- to get their faith in humanity restored.

Whatever the reason for going on RAGBRAI, most people find themselves wanting to prepare for this 7 day event by riding their bicycle more regularly. There are many trails around Iowa that people can ride to experience different parts of Iowa and to get their sits bones acclimated to sitting on their saddle for extended periods of time day after day.



■ The Wabash Trace Nature Trail is 63 miles of crushed limestone trails in Southwest Iowa, stretching from Council Bluffs to Blanchard. Riding South out of Council Bluffs, you will pass through Mineola, Silver City, Malvern, Imogene, Shenandoah and Coin before ending up in Blanchard.

■ The Kewash Nature Trail is 13.8 miles of crushed limestone and asphalt in Southeast Iowa. These trails go through the towns of Keota, West Chester and Washington.

■ The High Trestle Trail is 25 miles of paved trails in Central Iowa, stretching from Ankeny to Woodward. Riding north out of Ankeny, you will pass through Sheldahl, Slater and Madrid before ending up in Woodward.

■ The Raccoon River Valley Trail is 89 miles of paved trails in Central Iowa. These trails go through the towns of Waukee, Ortonville, Adel, Redfield, Linden, Panora, Yale, Herndon, Cooper,

Jefferson, Jamaica, Dawson, Perry, Minburn and Dallas Center.

■ The Cedar Valley Nature Trail is 52 miles of both paved and crushed limestone trails in East Central Iowa, stretching from Evansdale to Hiawatha. Riding south out of Evansdale, you will pass through Gilbertville, La Porte City, Brandon, Urbana, Center Point and Lafayette before ending in Hiawatha.

■ The Iowa Great Lakes Trail is 25 miles of paved trails in Northwest Iowa. These trails go through the towns of Milford, Arnolds Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake, Orleans, Wahpeton, West Okoboji and Lake Park.

■ The Trout Run Trail is 12 miles of paved trails. These trails encircle the city of Decorah in Northeast Iowa.

■ The Prairie Farmer Recreational Trail is 20 mile of paved trail in Northeast Iowa. Riding north from Calmar, you will pass through Ridgeway before ending up in Cresco.

When riding on the open roads or trails, here are some things to consider to keep you and others safe:

■ Always wear a helmet. You never know when an accident might happen; that is why they are called accidents.

■ Never wear headphones/earbuds. Wearing headphones/earbuds hinders what you can hear around you, making it difficult to hear other people, emergency vehicles, etc.

■ Use hand signals to make others aware of your intentions (right hand turn, left hand turn, stop).

■ When you are passing someone from behind, call out,

“On your left” and only pass on the left side of the person. This will give the person warning and hopefully prevent them from accidentally moving in front of you as you are passing.

■ If you need to stop, move out of the way of others. This may mean moving off of the trail.

■ When riding with others, do not take up the whole trail/road. Ride single file when others are around.

So get out and exercise; ride your bike to experience a new part of Iowa, but remember to have fun and be safe!!

*****Before you begin any exercise routine, you should consult your doctor.***

PARENTS @ PLAY:

Have a ball with these toys,
and baby will like them, too

BY ARMIN BROTT AND SAMANTHA FEUSS
Tribune News Service

When it comes to play, toddlers are a pretty accommodating group, capable of having fun with almost anything, almost anywhere. (As a toddler, Armin's oldest daughter's favorite toy was a 29-cent dish scrubber). But finding toddler toys and games that will keep adults engaged, too, is harder. Here are four toys that you and your little one will definitely be able to enjoy together.

KIDS' PICNIC TABLE

(American Plastic Toys)

The name of the company — American Plastic Toys — says it all: Everything they manufacture is made of plastic, and it's all built in America. The only things they left out are that while their toys aren't fancy, they're sturdy, safety tested, fun to play with and surprisingly affordable. (The "Unpretentious, Sturdy, Safe, Fun, Affordable American Plastic Toys company" seems a little cumbersome). Their new picnic table is no exception. Adult assembly is required, but it takes only a few minutes and you won't need screws or tools. Once it's built, it becomes the perfect table for messy activities. Cover it with sand, spill a glass of grape juice, or knock over a cup of finger paint? Did the kids turn it on its side to use it as a fort? No problem. Just hose it off, let it dry, and you're good to go. Ages 2 and up. At major retailers or <http://americanplastictoys.com/>

KIDS' SAND AND WATER PLAY SET

(American Plastic Toys)

The Sand and Water Play Set has two sections: a canal for water use and a sand pit. There's also a working crane for moving cargo from one area to the other. We especially liked the snap-on wave maker that kids can use to create a current to move boats up the canal. The Set also comes with cargo units, trucks barges, and speedboats. It's aimed at kids as young as 18 months, but you'll love playing with it, too. \$14.99 at Target and other retailers.

TOTS FLUFFY FRIENDS

(Alex Toys)

Let's face it, crafts can be messy — especially when they're

being done by a toddler. Tots Fluffy Friends changes all that. It's a great way to give your little ones a chance to show off their creativity without you having to worry about glue, scissors, cleaning up or finding glitter in your hair two weeks later. The kit comes with four crack-and-peel collage boards (shaped like a duck, cat, bear and bunny), four packages of colorful, shredded paper and 40 stickers. Once you've peeled the board, your toddler can make his or her own one-of-a-kind creation using bits (or handfuls) of the shredded paper and the stickers. Ages 18 months and up. \$17.99 at major retailers or www.alextoys.com.

FLIP FLOP ABC BLOCKS

(Mirari/Patch Products)

As kids, most of us had ABC blocks, but you've never seen any like these. On one side of these clear plastic cubes is a bold, colorful letter. Turn it around and dancing on a string inside is an adorable animal or object that starts with the same letter (unicorn for U, star for S, grapes for G, and so on). There's also a magnetic "magic wand" that your toddler can use to control the figures. These blocks are incredibly engaging (for adults and kids) and they're great for building fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination and, of course, letter recognition (who knew that learning the alphabet could induce so many giggles?) They also introduce the concept of cause and effect. Our only complaint is that not all of the letters have a corresponding figure (the ones that don't instead feature a dancing letter). For ages 12 months and up. \$49.99. At your favorite retailer or <http://www.patch-products.com/>



Who knew that learning the alphabet could induce so many giggles? Photo by TNS

Expect a passion for this vine, but look before you leap

BY KATHY VAN MULLEKOM
Daily Press (Newport News, Va.)

Vertical gardening with vines is tempting, especially when you grow out of horizontal space to use.

Vines are romantic looking, winding their way around trellises and arbors and across the tops of fences.

But, as the old saying goes, vines creep, then leap. Beware of where they can leap — and then emerge.

Purple Passionflower vine is one of those grand leapers. During its first year in a garden, passionflower is polite and prolific. The next year, passionflower turns into a rude runaway, sending its roots deep underground and into all parts of a garden.

Native plant expert Helen Hamilton of Williamsburg, Va., likes passionflower, too, and knows a lot about its good and bad behavior.

“The plant has deep roots and colonizes to form groundcover,” says Hamilton, co-author of “Wildflowers and Grasses of Virginia’s Coastal Plain.”

“In a controlled garden or flower bed, this viny plant should be located in a container, sunk into the ground.”

Intricate in design and looks, the vine’s three-inch lavender flowers have a fringe of wavy, hair-like segments, banded with purple and on top the five sepals and petals. Three styles extend from the ovary in the center of the flower, a unique arrangement that allows

only large bees to collect pollen, according to Hamilton. Leaves are attractively toothed along the edges.

Purple Passionflower is a host plant for the Variegated Fritillary butterfly. Emerging early in the spring, female butterflies lay their eggs on the leaves of the plant and can produce as many as three broods through the year. Caterpillars feed on the leaves throughout summer and into the fall.

Growing in fields, pine woods and fencerows across Virginia, the plant thrives in the southeastern United States, Bermuda and west to Oklahoma and Texas. The plant prefers rich soil but grows in any kind. Full sun produces abundant flowers; drainage can be moist to dry.

Passiflora is a large family — more than 500 species of the genus, mostly vines, shrubs and trees of tropical America, according to Hamilton. Passiflora Society International — www.passiflorasociety.org — tracks newly discovered species and man-created hybrids. Native to South America and sold often in local nurseries, the leaves of nonnative blue passionflower (*P. caerulea*) have five lobes, not three.

Passionflowers were discovered by a Roman Catholic friar in Mexico in the early 1600s, according to Hamilton, and symbolism of Christianity abounds: The combined sepals and petals are said to represent 10 apostles (omitting Peter, who denied, and Judas, who betrayed), the five anthers for the five wounds, the

column of the ovary for the cross, the stamens for the hammers and the three stigmas for the three nails.

Chemists have found drugs in passionflower used to combat insomnia and anxiety, according to Hamilton.

Another name for passionflower, Maypop, comes from the hollow yellow fruits that pop when crushed.

The greenish-yellow edible fruit makes a tasty jelly. It is the official state wildflower of Tennessee, she says.

VARIEGATED FRITILLARY

No other butterfly looks like the fritillary family — their wings have a checkered black and orange pattern, according to Hamilton. The most common, Variegated Fritillary (*Euptoieta claudia*), features lightly scalloped edges and wavy black lines on the upper side of its orange wings. The underside is tan and brown, making it difficult to distinguish from a dead leaf. The caterpillar is orange with white spots and black, branched spines; the chrysalis is a delicate pearl color with a few brown spots and gold spikes.

Fritillaries are among the earliest butterflies, the first brood appearing in early spring and two or three more broods through summer and into November. They fly in open sunny areas — fields, road edges, landfills; adults look for nectar from milkweeds, dogbane, red clover and tickseed sunflower. The female Variegated Fritillary lays eggs on a native passionflower, maypops, mayapple and violets.



Native Purple Passionflower. Photo by
courtesy Helen Hamilton/TNS

10 Tips to extend the life of home appliances

BY MICHAEL SCHROEDER
Angie's List

Show your workhorse appliances a little TLC, and they may stick around a bit longer.

Replacing a refrigerator or oven range can take a bite out of your budget, as can buying a new washer or dryer. To make sure your appliances stand the test of time and continue to perform, follow these pointers:

- Keep your fridge and freezer clean

In general, appliances operate best when spick-and-span. Besides regularly cleaning up leftovers in the fridge, keep condenser coils clean, says Bud Eader, manager at Bettar Appliance in Kensington, Md. Do so by using a condenser coil brush.

To clean the freezer, unplug it, remove all food, wipe it down with a baking-soda solution, use water to rinse it, and then dry the freezer with a towel before plugging it back in.

- Defrost your freezer

Many freezers today are frost-free. However, if you have a manual defrost freezer, plan to defrost it at least once every year, before frost gets to about a half-inch thick. Use a plastic or wooden scrape — no knives or other sharp instruments — to remove the frost layer.

- Scrub your oven and range, too

Clean inside your oven often and never let food debris stick around on burners, even if it requires a bit of elbow grease to remove.

Don't spray cleaning fluid directly on control panels though, which could cause them to short circuit. Instead, apply a little onto a rag to clean that surface.

- Don't foil your oven

Experts debate whether you should use the

self-cleaning feature if your oven comes with one, but they agree you shouldn't use aluminum foil under the baking element.

- Replace filters

Whether it's a charcoal filter in an oven, a filter in some dishwashers or refrigerators or the one in your furnace, follow manufacturer guidelines to clean and/or replace them as directed.

- Don't use dish soap in the dishwasher

This can hamper the machine's performance by creating gunky buildup. Use only dish detergent.

- Scrape off plates

Food debris can clog dishwasher pumps. "It's going to stop up the spray arms and, in the case of emptying the water out, it's possibly going to make the pump ... fail prematurely," Eader says.

- Don't overload your clothes washing machine

Doing so adds strain on the motor, tub bearings and other parts, besides not getting your clothes clean if water and detergent can't swish between them. "You shorten the life of the machine," Eader says.

Instead, follow the owner manual instructions on how much to load. Hint: If your machine is banging around under the weight of all of your laundry, you've gone overboard.

- Improve your dryer's circulation

Often forgotten, the lint screen needs to be cleaned regularly. Failing to do or allowing your dryer vent to become clogged will force your dryer to work overtime (read: retire sooner) and can present a serious fire hazard. Plan to have your dryer's exhaust system cleaned annually.

- Watch where you apply stain removers

Spraying it on top of washers or dryers can corrode painted or plastic parts.

Charcoal or gas grill?

Answers to a burning question

BY PAUL POGUE
Angie's List

Among outdoor grilling fans, no rivalry burns hotter.

Certain rivalries last forever — think Coke vs. Pepsi or Apple vs. Windows — and, now, gas grills vs. charcoal grills.

We asked some seasoned grilling experts to weigh in on this searing question as the spring/summer grilling season arrives.

Gas grills bring convenience. Aaron Nelson, owner of Quality Grill Service in Indianapolis, says grills powered by gas or propane turn on faster and offer more options and control than comparable charcoal grills.

"You can get your food on the grill in 10 minutes, you don't have to keep adding coals, and you can moderate your heat," he says. "You can cook a steak, fish, chicken and veggies at the same time on a gas grill. Someone who's really savvy with a grill and wants to do things like smoking meat might gravitate to a charcoal grill, but the gas grill offers more options to cook quickly and conveniently."

Charcoal wins the flavor competition

Nonetheless, Nelson, who primarily works on gas grills, says many grillers swear by the intangible element that charcoal adds to the barbecue experience.

"You're using smoke-heat, so your meats are going to have

a little more flavor," he says.

"The gas grill industry has some really neat designs to mimic the smoky feel, and a seasoned grill brings some of that flavor, but you can never fully mimic what charcoal-smoked meat will taste like."

Jeremy Leyva, sales associate at the All American Grill Store in Jacksonville, Fla., says the two types draw in different fandoms, especially given the do-it-yourself, wing-it-on-the-fly creativity charcoal offers.

"Gas fans like the ease of use and not having to tinker," he says. "Diehard charcoal fans know they'll get a different flavor. A lot of people who like to work with their hands or tinker tend to lean toward the charcoal."

Check the fuel differences

Nelson says gas grills consume less fuel and thus cost less. At a cost of about \$20 per refill, a single propane tank will last for more than 20 grillings, he says. "You're looking at less than a dollar per cooking to feed your whole family," Nelson says. "A bag of charcoal runs between \$6 and \$10, and it can only be used once."

However, Leyva points out that modern, ceramic charcoal grills cook with more than just the blackened charcoal briquettes most people recognize from years of outdoor entertaining. "Lump" charcoal offers a high-heat, all-natural format.

"It's all hickory or oak, with no accelerants," he says. "You get a better taste from it, and

it tends to last longer, because unlike charcoal briquettes, you can relight it next time." He says a 20-pound bag costs about \$24.

Look for the warranty

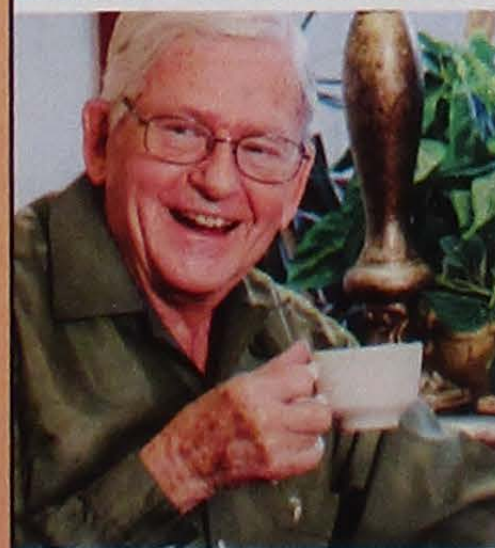
No matter which kind of grill you purchase, pay close attention to the warranty to ensure many years of happy barbecues.

"You can buy a grill for a couple of hundred bucks at a big-box store, but it'll be junk in three years," Nelson says. "The good companies like Weber or Broilmaster offer strong warranties so this will be the last grill

you ever buy. You'll be spending around \$800 or \$900 for a portable Weber grill, but the 25-year warranty makes it the best value for your dollar."

Leyva says people can pay as little as a few hundred dollars for a charcoal grill, but he advises customers to go with a name brand with a solid warranty, which tends to cost between \$800 and \$1,200.

"Pay attention to the thickness of the stainless steel and the extent to which the company backs the warranty," he says.



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In the world of human health, magnesium is a key nutrient for many vital functions in the body. Deficiency of this mineral is thought to be linked to more than 20 disease conditions. Despite this importance, it's estimated that more than 80% of Americans do not get enough in their daily diet.



AMY CLARK

WHY IS MAGNESIUM SUCH A BIG DEAL?

First, magnesium is used by every organ in the body, specifically the heart, muscles and kidneys. It's instrumental in the transmission of nerve signals and is a key player in muscle relaxation. Building proteins for muscle requires magnesium. The action of more than 300 enzymes relies on magnesium to initiate the process. This important mineral regulates blood pressure and blood sugar levels and can be found in every cell in the body. Magnesium is a component of almost every chemical

reaction that takes place in the body, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. That's why magnesium is such a big deal.

HOW MUCH MAGNESIUM DOES A PERSON NEED?

The recommended daily intake (RDI) for male adults 19 years of age and older is 400 to 420 milligrams of magnesium daily. Adult females, including women who are pregnant or lactating need 310 to 320 milligrams daily. Mild to moderate stress increases the need for magnesium as do physical injury, routine exertion in athletics and chronic illness. Be aware that many medications decrease magnesium absorption so additional supplementation may be needed. Common medications that deplete magnesium are acid blockers/antacids/anti-ulcer, diuretics, analgesics, anti-inflammatory drugs and some antibiotics. Additional prescription medications known for depleting magnesium

include those for blood pressure, diabetes and lowering cholesterol. If you are taking any of these medications, you may want to check with your pharmacist or healthcare provider for guidance.

HOW CAN A PERSON GET MORE MAGNESIUM INTO THEIR DIET?

Food sources rich in magnesium include greens (particularly Swiss chard and spinach), green beans, seeds (pumpkin, squash, sunflower, flax, sesame-including tahini), unsweetened cocoa powder, almond butter, seaweed and Brazil nuts. Edamame and black beans as well as buckwheat, millet, wheat germ and molasses are good food sources, too.

Because magnesium works in a balance with vitamin D, vitamin K2 and calcium, it's important to eat a varied diet every day that provides these essential nutrients. A varied diet includes plenty of vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes, fruits, animal or vegetable protein and dairy foods or a comparable source

of calcium.

NEED SOME IDEAS FOR GETTING MAGNESIUM ON THE TABLE?

1. Breakfast: sprinkle wheat germ, sunflower seeds and your favorite fruit on yogurt or hot cereal to start the day with a magnesium boost.
 2. Lunch: make a salad with your favorite lettuce, adding Swiss chard and spinach, then topping with pumpkin seeds and edamame plus your favorite vinaigrette. Or make a spinach salad with black beans, sunflower seeds and cooked millet.
 3. Snack: top whole grain crackers with almond butter.
- Please contact a licensed healthcare provider for individual advice.

Amy Clark received her Bachelor of Science Degree in nutrition and dietetics from Iowa State University in 2003 and completed her dietetic internship at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in 2004. She is a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and Iowa Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Amy completed CDR Certificate of Training in Adult Weight Management in November 2006. This information is not intended to be medical advice.

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